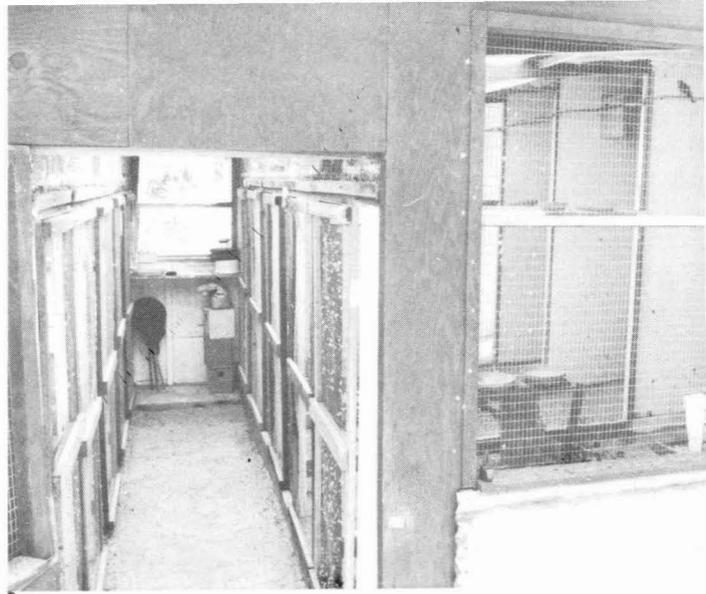


*Rosella's flight cages, 3 feet wide, 12 feet deep, approximately 7 feet high.*



*Grass Parakeets, 1 pair per cage, 3 feet wide, 8 feet deep, approx. 6 ft. high*

## A.F.A. Visits A Member's Aviaries



*Ray Brode*

"Specialization is the key to breeding success," says Ray Brode, this month's A.F.A. member under the spotlight.

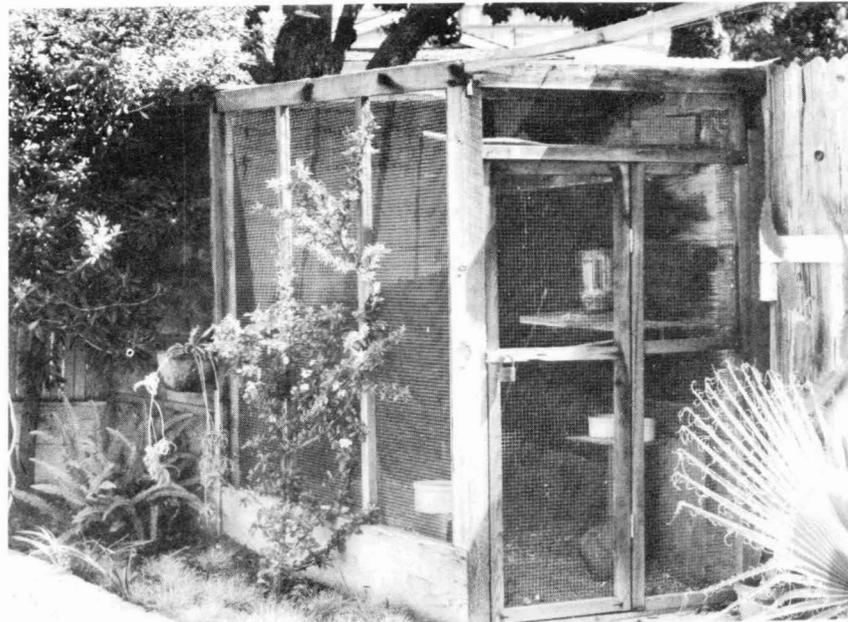
Ray, a native of Illinois, came west during his tour of duty in the service during World War II. Unfortunately, his journey didn't end in California, as was the case with most young men during those difficult years. Rather, he continued further west to the Solomon Islands.

It was during his experiences in the jungles of the Solomons, under combat conditions, that Ray first became interested in birds. He was deeply impressed with the unusually colorful variety of bird life that carried on in the midst of man's warring all around. During R&R in Australia, Ray's interest was further kindled by that country's spectacular avifauna.

After the war, Ray determined to settle in sunny Southern California, where he met his lovely wife, Anne. Dur-

ing those years immediately following WW II, the Brode family lived in an apartment, forcing Ray to satisfy his bird interest with a pet Budgie or Cockatiel. It was in the mid-fifties that he was to seriously develop his interest in aviculture, aided by more space that a home provides. His early beginnings naturally featured the breeding of Budgies, then Cockatiels. During this period he recalls finding more birds at Sears than in local pet shops — a curious arrangement since department stores often provided only minimal care. Before long, Ray discovered the Lady Gould and acquired a number of breeding pairs. His finch fancy also included Stars and several other species of Grass-finches. It was not long after that when his interest expanded to include Grass-parakeets, Rosellas, and Lovebirds.

Today, Ray's favorite bird is the Stanley Rosella, with which he has worked for some time. He claims the Stanley is



*Flight cage for Senegal Parrots.*

similar to the Cockatiel in temperament, size, and breeding requirements. Like the Cockatiel, the Stanley will also develop a friendship for its owner. Ray feels the Stanley has been overlooked by many aviculturists, perhaps due to a lack of knowledge about the bird's requirements, beauty, and behavior. The Stanley is not difficult to raise. However, there are not many around.

Ray finds the Grassparakeets very enjoyable to raise too, because they are colorful, small, and do not require special handling. Under good management, they do very well — many becoming prolific breeders, which is important as the Scarlet-chest and Turquoise are endangered species. His consistent success with these birds is his contribution to conservation.

Feeding a natural diet, similar to one the birds would enjoy in their native habitat, is a central feature of the Brode breeding program. He regularly provides Pyracantha berries, Cotoneaster berries, Hawthorne berries, Bottlebrush berries, and Eucalyptus seedlings as the season dictates. These plants are, of course, native Australians. Additional components of the natural diet are seeding Chickweed, New Zealand Spinach, and Alfalfa.

Naturally, a variety of seeds must be fed. For this purpose, Ray offers a Parakeet mix containing 40% Canary, medium size Sunflower, and Safflower. An extra treat called "Song Food" is provided twice weekly. Song Food contains Canary, Niger, Rape, Lettuce, Sesame, Poppy, and Saffron. During breeding season the seed portion of the diet is augmented with soaked seed and sprouted whole wheat bread, which is moistened with water and sprinkled with Thoro-Vita No. 27. Thoro-Vita, among other things, contains bone meal and brewer's yeast.

Clean aviaries are a must, Ray believes. This includes fresh water daily, clean seed trays, and periodic removal of droppings from the sand-covered floors with a screening device Ray has constructed

Pair of Senegal Parrots, Male-L, Female-R.



for the job (see photo). The aviaries are also protected from passing wild birds, as much as possible. Dampness should be avoided, and sunlight should be abundant.

Ray utilizes Cockatiel nestboxes for the Stanley Rosellas and English Budgie boxes for the Grassparakeets. These boxes are provided with wood shavings and sawdust, which the birds rearrange to their liking.

Ray also keeps a couple of pairs of Senegal Parrots. One pair has bred for him, but in general they seem to him, to be shy — though very beautiful. We may hear more about them in the future.

Ray's busy schedule of work and bird related activities would not be possible if it were not for his wife, Anne, who assists him in the care of his flock. They also have a fine daughter who is developing an interest.

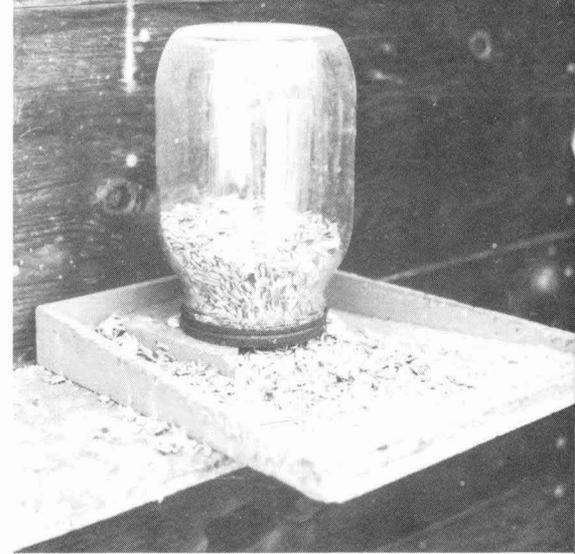
Ray is not only a member of A.F.A., but serves on the A.F.A. Board of Directors as a delegate from the Avicultural Society of America, on whose board he also serves. Ray helped found the South Bay Bird Club less than two years ago, and is currently serving a second term as that club's President. Shortly after South Bay's formation, they joined A.F.A., too. Today, they can boast a membership approaching eighty, with a treasury of more than \$1,300.00 — not bad for a fledgling club, or any other club, for that matter.

Ray's professional life began as an aerospace technical specialist. Like so many others in his industry, he became a casualty of the cutbacks in the space program, after more than twenty years.

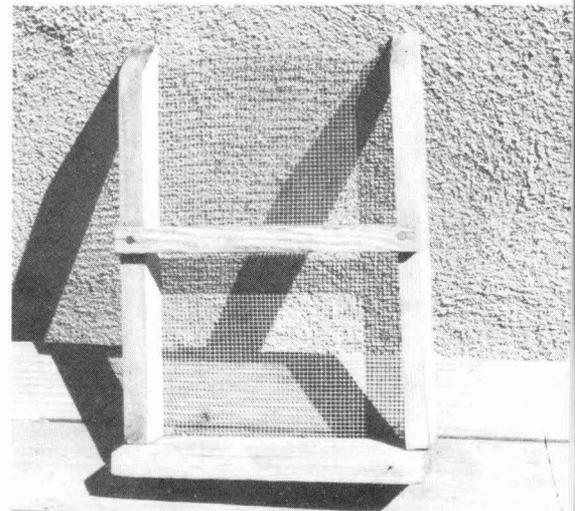
Today Ray is the sole owner of Alarmtronics — a burglar alarm firm with a growing market among aviculturists. He has helped many Southern California breeders with the installation of a security system, that is fast becoming as important a part of a successful breeding program as bird seed.

Continual improvement, as a breeder, is Ray's hope. He firmly believes in quality, not quantity. It is better to raise a few good birds and improve the stock than to raise a lot of mediocre birds, which do little for anyone. To this end, he keeps only one pair of birds to a flight. Such an approach permits controlled breeding and keeps track of blood lines. Coincidentally, the number of young produced per pair per year is greater, than with several pairs of birds per flight.

With Ray's sincere devotion to aviculture, his efforts with clubs, and the participation of his family, his success seems assured. A.F.A. believes we have just begun to hear from Mr. Brode ■



1 gallon jar hopper type feeder.



1/8" mesh screen for sifting sandy floor to remove droppings.

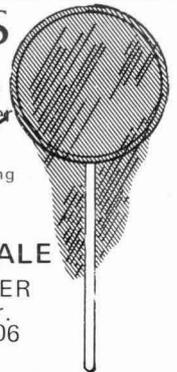
## BIRD NETS

Nylon Netting  
18" Hardwood Handle  
Wire Hoop 11" Diameter

**\$3.50 each**  
plus 50c postage & handling  
Write for prices and  
amount wanted

**RETAIL-WHOLESALE**

RAYNOR A. FARMER  
1515 N. Mar-Les Dr.  
Santa Ana, CA. 92706  
(714) 531-1809



## agapornis acres

**FOR SALE**  
BLACK MASK — Green, Blue  
PEACH FACE — Blue, Blue Pied & Splits  
FISCHER'S  
**ORDERS TAKEN FOR OTHER  
LOVEBIRDS**  
PARROTS — pair only - Senegal's, Meyer's  
Jardine's

Ph. (714) 727-1486  
(Let phone ring at least 10 times.)  
2376 Bella Vista, Vista, CA. 92083